

BROCKTON ENTERPRISE (MA)
18 April 1984

Ex-agent alleges CIA abuses

By GIL BLISS

Enterprise Correspondent

BRIDGEWATER — The Central Intelligence Agency's war against communism has resulted in "major genocide" and many of the victims are citizens of Third World countries, according to former CIA official John Stockwell.

Stockwell is the highest ranking CIA official to date to resign and pen a "tell-all" book about his experiences. He told a Bridgewater State College audience Tuesday night that he involved himself in CIA activities because he felt that what he was doing was in the best interests of the United States.

The dark-haired, ex-Marine told an audience of approximately 50 people he was involved in covert activities in both Vietnam and Angola, following service in the conventional branches of the military.

The CIA's recent mining of Nicaraguan harbors is part of a "destabilization" movement that is designed to undermine public faith in the government of whatever country is under scrutiny, the ex-official said.

Stockwell said CIA activity in Nicaragua is designed to disrupt society there in ways similar to earlier disruption attempts in China, Chile, Cuba, Angola and Vietnam.

Stockwell graduated from the University of Texas in the time between the Korean and Vietnam Wars and embarked on a "glamorous time" in the service. After his discharge, the CIA contacted him for employment. He worked for them until 1977, being chiefly involved in enlisting native CIA agents in the country to which he was assigned.

His two books, "In Search Of Enemies," and "Red Sunset," have been scathing attacks on his former employer. He has been sued by the government agency over the first book.

He said the assets from his book have been frozen by the CIA and that he has three others that have not yet been published. He is currently working on a sixth book. His first book was written in 1978.

Stockwell said the United States is "on the brink of war in Central America," and that government leaders are using "the same rationale as Vietnam" in pursuing military conflict there.

"We're lied to by the government," he said. "They're committed to a policy of lying to the world." He cited figures uncovered by the 1975 Frank Church Senate committee investigating the CIA, detailing hundreds of covert actions conducted by the CIA in the last 35 years of its existence.

One million direct victims of the actions have died and millions more have died indirectly, he said, mostly Third World natives, rather than Russians or Americans.

He cited economic considerations of American big business as the motivating force behind the constant political upheaval that he said is caused by the CIA.

Stockwell related a background that began with his upbringing in the Belgian Congo as the son of an American government employee, a bit of experience that proved useful later when he was assigned to Angola.

He was sent to Vietnam in the mid 1960s, serving as a chief of station, recruiting Vietnamese to work against the northern communists. He said the CIA was supporting a corrupt government, one that kept American foreign aid and pocketed funds that were designated for the anti-communist war effort.

The American failure to evacuate many of their native operatives when Saigon collapsed served as a source of "emotional trauma" for Stockwell, but it wasn't until he became involved in the Angolan operation that he began to harbor serious doubts about his work.

Because of his African experience, he was a vital part of the decision-making process for Angola, and he found that the lofty ideals and justification for the acts he had been involved in did not exist in the upper levels of government as he had imagined.

"I could not find justification for my actions in management," he said.

Besides Angola and Vietnam, Stockwell detailed atrocities committed by the CIA in Grenada recently and even incidents in the United States, where Stockwell said American citizens have been used for CIA experiments in the past.

He cited an incident of a virus-laden barge being dragged through San Francisco harbor as an example, as well as a Long Island town allegedly being infected with mass cases of whooping cough.

Stockwell said that he has been lecturing on the CIA since his books were published, and although it has been a financial hardship for him, it's been a "morally gratifying experience."

"I have no regrets," he said.